



**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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(213) 351-5602

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May 20, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
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Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

By Brandon Nichols

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Contracts Administration Division (CAD) conducted a Contract Compliance Review of Niños Latinos Unidos Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in October 2015. The FFA has three offices, one located in the Fourth Supervisorial District, one located in the Fifth Supervisorial District, and one in Riverside County. All offices provide services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children and to children placed by other Counties. According to the FFA's Program Statement, its stated purpose is "to recruit, train, certify and provide support for Latino homes. Provide bilingual (English/Spanish) and bicultural staff to work with certified foster parents, potential foster parents, County Children's Social Workers (CSWs) and foster children. Provide culturally sensitive supervision to the foster homes and ensure that quality culturally sensitive foster care is provided. Provide Latino children culturally sensitive foster care services and foster homes to enable them to reunify with biological family whenever possible. If reunification is not an option, a more permanent plan such as adoption or emancipation services will be pursued. During this time, all efforts will be made to provide consistency for the children by keeping them with the same certified home."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 184 placed children in 77 Certified Foster Homes (CFHs). The placed children's average length of placement was 22 months and their average age was 7.

SUMMARY

During CAD's Contract Compliance Review, the interviewed children generally reported: feeling safe in the FFA CFHs; having been provided with good care and appropriate services; being comfortable in their placement environment; and being treated with respect and dignity. The Certified Foster Parents (CFPs) reported being supported by the FFA staff in their efforts to provide care and supervision to the children placed in their homes.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Services"

The FFA was in full compliance with 8 of 11 sections of CAD's Contract Compliance Review: Certified Foster Homes; Facility and Environment; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children; and Personnel Records.

CAD noted deficiencies in the areas of: Licensure/Contract Requirements, related to a Community Care Licensing (CCL) citation; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, related to the FFA not obtaining the DCFS Children's Social Worker's (CSW's) authorization to implement Needs and Services Plans (NSPs), the FFA not developing timely, comprehensive, Initial and Updated NSPs; and Education and Workforce Readiness, related to a child not being enrolled in school within 3 school days.

Attached are the details of CAD's review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On January 13, 2016, Patricia Kirkpatrick, DCFS CAD, and Dario Villamarin, DCFS Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD), held an exit conference with the FFA representatives: Luis Mendez, Administrator; Wendy B. Contreras, Administrator; Yvette Cucuta, Supervisor; Edward Velasco, Supervisor; and Andrea Lacey, Assistant Administrator. The FFA representatives agreed with the review findings and recommendations; were receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve the FFA's compliance with regulatory standards; and agreed to address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

A copy of this compliance report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller and Community Care Licensing.

The FFA provided the attached approved Compliance CAP, addressing the recommendations noted in this Compliance report. The OHCMD provided technical assistance to the FFA on February 10, 2016, to help in the implementation of their new protocol.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:KR:LTI:pk

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Fahir Milian, Chief Executive Officer, Niños Latinos Unidos FFA
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

**NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW SUMMARY**

9246 Alondra Blvd.
Bellflower, CA 90706

License Number: 197803061

38424 10th St. East, Suite 200
Palmdale, CA 93550

License Number: 197805210

3392 Durahart St., Suite A
Riverside, CA 92507

License Number: 336426565

| | Contract Compliance Review | Findings: October 2015 |
|-----------|--|---|
| I | <u>Licensure/Contract Requirements</u> (7 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation 2. Timely, Cross-Reported SIRs 3. Runaway Procedures in Accordance with the Contract 4. Are there CCL Citations/OHCMD Safety Reports 5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training 6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents (CFP) Whole Foster Family Home Payments 7. FFA Conducts an Assessment of CFP Prior to Placement of Two (2) or More Children | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Improvement Needed 5. Full Compliance 6. Not Applicable 7. Not Applicable |
| II | <u>Certified Foster Homes</u> (12 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Home Study and Safety Inspection Conducted Prior to Certification 2. Agency's Inquiry with OHCMD for Historical Information Prior to Certification 3. Timely Criminal Clearances - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Justice (DOJ), Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) Prior to Certification 4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 5. Health Screening & TB Test Prior to Certification 6. All Required Training Prior to Certification 7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity 8. Safety Inspection Completed At Least Every Six Months or Per-Approved Program Statement 9. Completed Annual Training Hours for Re-certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates 10. Current Driver's License/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers 11. Criminal Clearances and Health Screening/CDL/CPR/FBI/DOJ/CACI/Auto Insurance for Other Adults in the Home | <p>Full Compliance (All)</p> |

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| | 12. FFA Assists CFPs in Providing Transportation Needs | |
| III | <u>Facility and Environment</u> (7 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exterior/Grounds Well Maintained 2. Common Areas Well Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Well Maintained 4. Sufficient and Appropriate Educational Resources 5. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food 6. CFP Conducted Disaster Drills and Documentation Maintained 7. Money and Clothing Allowance Logs Maintained | Full Compliance (All) |
| IV | <u>Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery</u> (10 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FFA Obtains or Documents Efforts to Obtain DCFS Children's Social Worker's (CSW's) Authorization to Implement NSPs 2. CFPs Participated in the Development of the NSPs 3. Children Progressing Towards Meeting NSP Goals 4. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive, Initial NSP with Child's Participation 5. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive, Updated NSPs with Child's Participation 6. Therapeutic Services Received 7. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented 8. DCFS Children's Social Worker's Monthly Contacts Documented in Child's Case File 9. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Quarterly Reports 10. FFA Social Workers Conduct Required Visits | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improvement Needed 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Improvement Needed 5. Improvement Needed 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Not Applicable 10. Full Compliance |
| V | <u>Education and Workforce Readiness</u> (5 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Enrolled in School Within 3 School Days 2. Children Attend School as Required and FFA Facilitates in Meeting Children's Educational Goals 3. Current Children's Report Cards/Progress Reports Maintained 4. Children's Academic Performance and/or Attendance Increased 5. FFA Facilitates Child's Participation in YDS or Equivalent Services and Vocational Programs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improvement Needed 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance |

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| VI | <u>Health and Medical Needs</u> (4 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial Medical Exams Conducted Timely 2. Follow-Up Medical Exams Conducted Timely 3. Initial Dental Exams Conducted Timely 4. Follow-Up Dental Exams Conducted Timely | Full Compliance (All) |
| VII | <u>Psychotropic Medication</u> (2 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review | Full Compliance (All) |
| VIII | <u>Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being</u> (10 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Informed of Agency's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe in the CFP Home 3. CFPs' Efforts to Provide Nutritious Meals and Snacks 4. CFPs Treat Children with Respect and Dignity 5. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and to Receive Correspondence 6. Children Free to Attend or Not Attend Religious Services/Activities of Their Choices 7. Children's Chores are Reasonable 8. Children Informed About Their Medication and Right to Refuse Medication 9. Children Aware of Right to Refuse or Receive Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care 10. Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Extracurricular Activities, Enrichment and Social Activities | Full Compliance (All) |
| IX | <u>Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being</u> (7 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clothing Allowance Provided in Accordance with FFA Program Statement 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality 3. Children Involved in the Selection of Their Clothing 4. Provision of Sufficient Supply of Clean Towels and Personal Care Items Meeting Ethnic Needs 5. Minimum Weekly Monetary Allowances 6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement and Assistance with a Life Book/ Photo Album | Full Compliance (All) |

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| X | <p><u>Discharged Children</u> (3 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed Discharge Summary 2. Attempts to Stabilize Children's Placement 3. Child Completed High School (if applicable) | Full Compliance (All) |
| XI | <p><u>Personnel Records</u> (9 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Criminal Clearances (FBI, DOJ, CACI) Signed and Submitted Timely 2. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 3. FFA Social Workers Met Education/Experience Requirements 4. Timely Employee Health Screening/TB Clearances 5. Valid CDL and Auto Insurance 6. FFA Employees Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 7. FFA Employees Completed All Required Training and Documentation Maintained 8. FFA Social Workers Have Appropriate Caseload Ratio 9. FFA Maintained Written Declarations for Part-Time Contracted FFA Social Workers Caseloads Not to Exceed a Total of 15 Children | Full Compliance (All) |

**NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016**

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The following report is based on a “point in time” review. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the October 2015 review. The purpose of this review was to assess Niños Latinos Unidos Foster Family Agency’s (the FFA’s) compliance with the County contract and State regulations and included a review of the FFA’s Program Statement, as well as internal administrative policies and procedures. The compliance review covered the following 11 areas:

- Licensure/Contract Requirements,
- Certified Foster Homes,
- Facility and Environment,
- Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery,
- Education and Workforce Readiness,
- Health and Medical Needs,
- Psychotropic Medication,
- Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being,
- Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being,
- Discharged Children,
- Personnel Records.

For the purpose of this review, 12 placed children were selected for the sample. The Contracts Administration Division (CAD) interviewed five children, as one child was unavailable due to hospitalization, and six children were pre-verbal or too young to be interviewed. During the home visits, the children were observed to be comfortable and well cared in the Certified Foster Homes (CFHs), and their Certified Foster Parents (CFPs) were observed to be responsive to the children’s needs. CAD reviewed 12 case files to assess the level of care and services the children received. Additionally, four discharged children’s files were reviewed to assess the FFA’s compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, five placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. These children’s case files were reviewed to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

CAD reviewed eight CFP files and five staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements. Site visits were conducted to the FFA and the CFHs to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to the placed children.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

CAD found the following three areas out of compliance:

Licensure/Contract Requirements

- Community Care Licensing (CCL) citation.

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CCL cited the FFA in a complaint received by CCL on April 28, 2015. CCL substantiated an allegation of lack of supervision by a CFP, when a 3-year-old child fell off a bed while playing with the other children in the home and broke his arm. The FFA provided additional training to the CFP per the stipulations of the Plan of Correction (POC) which was cleared by CCL on August 4, 2015. No investigation was required by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Emergency Response (ER) and Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section (OHCIS).

Recommendation:

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. The FFA is in compliance with Title 22 Regulations and free of CCL citations.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- FFA did not obtain the DCFS Children's Social Worker's (CSW's) authorization to implement Needs and Services Plans (NSPs).

CAD found that 10 of 29 NSPs reviewed did not have the DCFS CSWs' signatures. The FFA's efforts listed to obtain the DCFS CSWs' signatures on the NSPs were not within the mandated timeframes. The FFA did not follow-up as needed to ensure that the DCFS CSWs' signatures were obtained.

- FFA Social Workers did not develop timely, comprehensive, Initial NSPs.

CAD found that 1 of 11 Initial NSPs reviewed, was not completed timely. The Initial NSP was due on January 15, 2015 but it was not completed until February 25, 2015. CAD noted that 2 of 11 Initial NSPs reviewed did not include comprehensive and Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time-bound (SMART) goals and only identified two goals on each NSP. The NSP for a 3-year-old child identified family visits and ankle/foot issues as the goals for the child to work on. The other NSP for a 9-year-old child listed family visits and to learn to clean the dishes used by the child as the identified goals.

- FFA Social Workers did not develop timely, comprehensive, Updated NSPs.

CAD reviewed 18 Updated NSPs and found that one was not completed timely. The Updated NSP that was due on March 15, 2015, was not completed until April 8, 2015. CAD noted that 2 of 18 Updated NSPs reviewed did not include comprehensive and SMART goals. CAD found that the goals listed above for the Initial NSPs were continued as the same goals in the Updated NSPs for the same children.

Recommendations:

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

2. FFA obtains or documents efforts to obtain DCFS CSW's authorization to implement NSPs.

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3. FFA Social Workers develop timely, comprehensive, Initial NSPs.
4. FFA Social Workers develop timely, comprehensive, Updated NSPs.

Education and Workforce Readiness

- Child not enrolled in school within three school days.

One child placed on November 26, 2014, was not enrolled in school until December 18, 2014.

During the exit conference, the FFA representatives indicated that the school would not enroll the child without the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The FFA stated that they would ensure CFPs were re-trained on the requirements regarding the placed children's enrollment in school within three school days.

Recommendation:

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

5. Children are enrolled in school within three school days.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM DCFS CAD'S FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW

CAD's last compliance report dated September 11, 2015, identified four recommendations.

Results:

Based on the results of this review, the FFA fully implemented 1 of 4 previous recommendations for which the FFA was to ensure that:

- DCFS CSW's monthly contacts are documented in the child's case file.

Based on the results of the current review, the FFA did not implement 3 of 4 recommendations for which the FFA was to ensure that:

- The FFA is in compliance with Title 22 Regulations and free of CCL citations.
- The FFA obtains or documents efforts to obtain DCFS CSW's authorization to implement NSPs.
- FFA Social Workers develop timely, comprehensive, Updated NSPs.

Recommendation:

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

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6. The outstanding recommendations from the prior report noted in this report as recommendation numbers 1, 2, and 4, are fully implemented.

At the exit conference, the FFA representatives stated their desire to remain in compliance with Title 22 Regulations and contractual requirements and reiterated that the FFA will implement procedures to strive towards greater compliance. The FFA will continue to consult with the Out-of-Home Care Management Division for additional support and technical assistance, and CAD will assess implementation of the recommendations during the next review.



NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS®



FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

9246 ALONDRA BLVD., BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA 90706

TEL: (562) 925-7473

FAX: (562) 925-5039

February 12, 2016

Contract Compliance
Contracts Administration Division
Patricia Kirkpatrick, MSW, CSA I
3530 Wilshire Blvd., 4th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90010

Re: Contract Compliance Review

Dear Ms. Kirkpatrick:

Niños Latinos Unidos, FFA (NLU) will address the recommendations set forth in the most recent contract compliance review by the DCFS Contract Compliance, Contract Administration Division, as follows:

I. Licensure/Contract Requirements

Recommendation:

The FFA is to ensure that the Agency is free of substantiated Community Care Licensing complaints' reports on safety and physical plant deficiencies.

Response:

NLU Administrators, Supervisors, and FCSWs will continue to ensure that Certified Foster Parents are in compliance with all Title 22 regulations. FCSWs are to continue to conduct weekly spot checks. Upon finding a deficiency the FCSW will ask that the deficiency be corrected immediately and/or within a reasonable deadline. FCSW will then follow-up to ensure that the correction has been implemented by the written deadline date. Foster parents received training on the prudent parent standard and supervision of children and CCL cleared the deficiency.

IV. Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

Recommendations:

The FFA will obtain or document efforts to obtain the County worker's authorization to implement the NSP.

Response:

NLU Administrators and Supervisors will work closely with the FCSWs to ensure that 3 attempts for return of the NSP signature page are made within the required 5 day deadline. FCSWs when submitting the NSP reports to the CSW via email or fax will include their initial request (first attempt) request for CSW's signature. FCSW will then request (2nd attempt) CSW's signature and CC supervisor on NSP reports via email or fax. FCSW will request (3rd attempt) the CSW and CC the Assistant Regional Administrator. The FCSW will include a simultaneous BCC of the email to print and file on the respective section of the placed child's file with all attempts made to obtain the CSW's signature.

Recommendation:

The FFA social worker will complete timely, comprehensive, quarterly (Qtly) reports and updated needs and service plan (NSPs).

Response:

The Administrators and Supervisors will, no less than four business days prior to the reporting deadline, review all initial and updated NSP/Qtly reports in order to ensure the timeline of NSP/Qtly due dates are being adhered too. They will review NSP/Qtly reports to ensure that the reports are comprehensive and they address all areas of the needs and services plan in order to provide the placed child with the services he/she may need. In addition, the

V. Education and Workforce Readiness

Recommendation:

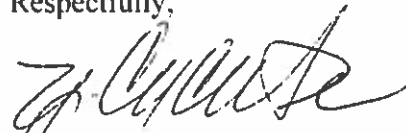
The FFA will ensure that the placed child is enrolled in school within three school days after placement and document efforts.

Response:

The Administrators and Supervisors will provide the FCSWs with the AB 490 fact sheet which will be distributed to Certified Foster Parent (CFP) to present to the school in order to facilitate the required deadline of enrolling the placed child in school within three school days. Specifically, the above fact sheet shall serve to further re-iterate our FCSW's continued work with our CFPs in the appropriate approach to procuring the timely enrollment of children in school, upon placement.

If you shall have any further questions regarding the contents of this response, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Y. Cucuta', written in a cursive style.

Yvette Cucuta, MSW
Assistant Administrator